

The BELLS of St. JAMES

news, inspiration,
and opportunities
for ministry

Message from the Rector **Ways to keep cool in Advent**

Dear Ones,
How are you keeping Advent this year? Maybe through trying on a new prayer practice, or reading a seasonal devotional like the Forward Day by Day (always available online [[Daily Prayer: A Resource of Forward Movement](#)] and in the tract rack next to our parish library).

Maybe you are revisiting books you've read in the past, like I am with the Advent scriptural meditations in Sam Portaro's *Daysprings* alongside a book of sermons and essays by Howard Thurman.

Maybe you are seeking out ways to support local charitable efforts, either financially or through volunteer service.

Maybe your Advent spiritual practice is to keep your cool and find some calm in the midst of this sometimes frantic season, of school spirit dress up days and holiday parties, work events, travel planning, gift shopping, and all the other busy-ness that goes into living in the season of Advent while the rest of the world has jumped ahead to Christmas!

During my sermon for our First Wednesday Healing Service (a Rite I spoken Holy Eucharist including anointing and prayers for healing that takes place at 12:30 on the first Wednesday of every month in the Lawrence Chapel) I mentioned a sermon I heard when I was in seminary approximately 20 years ago. It was on the occasion of a First Sunday of Advent, somewhere between 2004-2007, and its simple message of how to keep a Holy Advent has stuck with me over the decades—*study, fast, pray, give alms*. (It works for Lent, too!)

Whatever you decide to pick up or set down this Advent season, I hope that you find a place of quiet within yourself to prepare room for the coming of the Christ child on Christmas Eve.

Thursday

December 4, 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS



Friday, Dec 5

Film crew and trucks will use a portion of our parking lot all day.

Sunday, Dec 7

[link to the regular schedule](#)

Note: New Book Study for adult formation, 9:30, room 205. For info, email communications@stjamesmarietta.com

Monday, Dec 8

Film crew and trucks will use a portion of our parking lot all day.

Tuesday, Dec 9

Film crew and trucks will use a portion of our parking lot all day.

Wednesday, Dec 10

Dinner, evening prayer, and programs for all ages begin 5:30

Menu: Spaghetti and Meatballs. Breaded Chicken Tenders. Steamed Broccoli Garlic bread. Dessert and Salad.

[RSVP for Dinner Here](#)

A few things that I'm finding helpful this season:

- Preparing for Tom Cook's Sunday morning class on Howard Stringfellow's *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land* starting this Sunday, Dec. 7th, at 9:30AM in room 205 on the second floor, and continuing for the following two Sundays.
- [A Morning at the Office](#) - a straightforward daily Morning Prayer podcast complete with lectionary readings, and if you are feeling ambitious you can end your day with its companion [An Evening at Prayer](#) - the same thing but daily Evening Prayer.
- [From the Poustinia](#) - a short daily prayer podcast including chanted psalms and reflection by a seminary friend, all in under 15 minutes.
- *Daysprings: Meditations for the Weekdays of Advent, Lent, and Easter* by the Rev. Sam Portaro
- *The Growing Edge* by the Rev. Howard Thurman
- [Kate Bowler's Advent resources](#) including daily emailed meditations as well as downloadable guides
- The Society of St. John the Evangelist's daily email Brother Give Us a Word, sent year-round but Advent is a great time to try them out: [Word - SSJE](#)
- Anam Cara virtual mini-retreat coming up on Dec 10: [Preparing to Wait - A Lunchtime Mini-Retreat for Advent](#) - Anam Cara Ministries

In Christ,

Mo. Mariclaire +

P.S.- Please keep our confirmands-**Elise Allen, Molly Gribble, Laura White, Patrick White, and Mason Williams**- in your prayers this Sunday as they participate in the Diocesan Confirmation service at the Cathedral of St. Philip at 4PM. Join us in person if you can, or [on the cathedral's livestream](#)

Sunday, Dec 14

regular schedule

+

Daughters of the King

Room 205

12:15pm

+

Advent Lessons and

Carols

6:30p

Wednesday, Dec 17

Dinner, evening prayer,
and programs for all ages

begin

5:30p



Sunday Dec 21, 4:00p

regular worship schedule

+

Concert & Caroling

Georgia Spiritual Ensemble

Dr. Oral Moses, director

4:00p

reception following

Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, Dec 24

Children with pageant 4p

+

Choir and brass 7p

+

Choir and brass,
with caroling at 10:30p,
service 11p

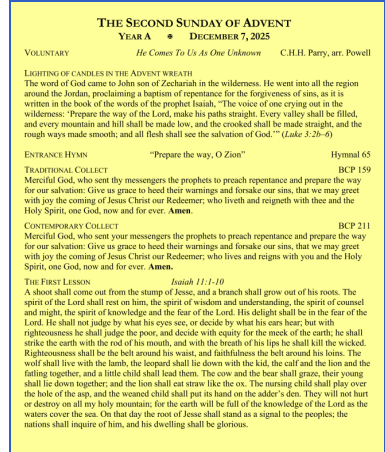
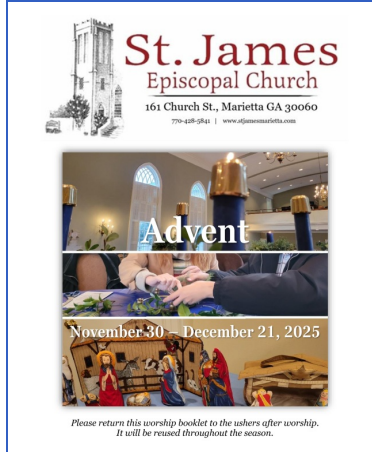
Livestream HQ - Links & Booklets for Worship at Home



10:30 Service On Line

Click on "live" to see a service
live or archived.

[Link
to livestream
on YouTube](#)



**Worship Booklet
for the Season**
contains prayers, service
music, and responses that we
will use until the Sunday
before Christmas.
[Link to the Worship
Booklet](#)

The Service Bulletin,
updated weekly, contains
lessons, hymn numbers, and
announcements: items that
change each Sunday.
[Link to the Service
Bulletin](#)



Can't see photos in *The Bells*? You never get the blue-shaded "Pulse of the Parish" at the end of this newsletter? You can tell your email service to show blocked or dropped content. Need help? Email communications@stjamesmarietta.com

Children & Youth News

Acolytes scheduled for Dec 7: The crucifer is **Sam**. Torch-bearers are **Stella** and **Cora**.
Photos: *Carrying the Gospel for the installation Nov. 19, photo by Jeff Whittingham. Right: Sam during the wreath-making event Nov. 30.*



Pageant! It's that wonderful time of year again—time to get ready for Advent! Our Children's Christmas Pageant is coming up on December 24th, 2024, at the 4 p.m. service. This fun and joyful tradition shares the story of Jesus' birth and lets our amazing church kids shine!

Use the following link for sign up and more information regarding practices. Remember not all practices are required but encouraged. [Google Form](#).



Register by December 14

When: Friday, Jan 2 - Sunday, Jan 4

Where: Camp Mikell, Toccoa

Who: All students (grades 6-12)

Cost: \$150 (scholarships available!)

Sign up by Dec 14 [here](#)

This retreat is for both middle and high school students, organized into specific age groups for activities and small group time. It's a fun weekend in January that lets kids experience camp in the cool months before the summer.

Contact Us

Natalie Fowler, Children's Ministry Coordinator children@stjamesmarietta.com

Keep up with the Diocesan Youth Council at <http://eycdioatl.org/>



He Comes to Us as One Unknown

Text: **Timothy Dudley-Smith**

Tune: **Repton (C. H. H. Parry)**

Paraphrasing Albert Schweitzer's well-known meditation, this hymn reflects on the quiet and mysterious ways Christ enters human life. Set to Parry's dignified tune *Repton*, his music will be heard again during Holy Communion. This arrangement begins with the melody played by the feet, allowing both hands to accompany with rich,

legato chords.

"He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and birth; to bear within our mortal frame a life, a death, a saving name, for every child of earth."

The Best of Rooms — Randall Thompson (1963)

A leading voice in 20th-century American choral music, Randall Thompson is cherished for his lyrical writing, clarity of line, and profound sensitivity to text. Composer of *Alleluia*, *Frostiana*, and *The Peaceable Kingdom*, he wrote music meant to serve both singer and listener.

In *The Best of Rooms*, Thompson sets Robert Herrick's devotional poem with tender simplicity, offering a prayerful invitation to prepare the "best of rooms"—the heart—for Christ's indwelling.

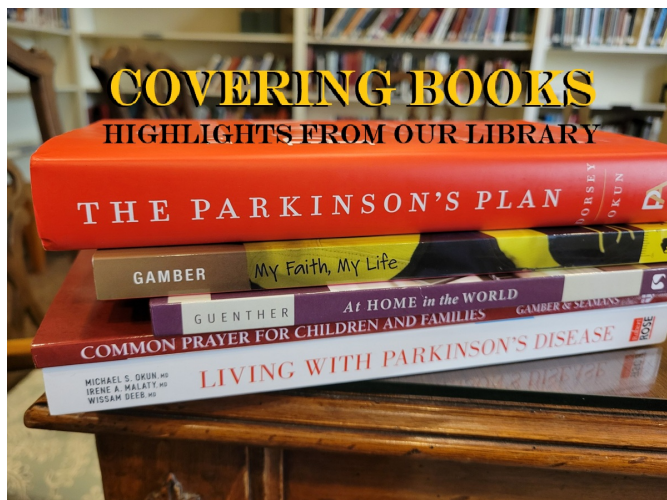
Prepare the Way, O Zion — Swedish Hymn

Rooted in the Advent proclamation of Isaiah and John the Baptist, this Swedish hymn summons all people to prepare a straight path for the coming Messiah. Its lively, folk melody conveys the joy and expectancy of a world preparing to receive Christ's salvation.

O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines — Text: Carl P. Daw Jr.; Tune: Jerusalem (C. H. H. Parry)

This modern hymn text offers a prayer for the healing of the nations paired with an echo of Isaiah's prophesy. Daw's text looks toward the promised day when justice overcomes strife, divisions are reconciled, and the peace of Christ renews the whole creation. The tune is often associated with national celebrations in the UK and was memorably used in the film, *Chariots of Fire*.

Each week, The Bells talks with Music Director Dr. Bryan Black about links between music for the 10:30 service and the liturgy. Email [The Bells](#) with your questions and comments.



There are five new volumes in the St. James library, something for everyone, some requested. They are processed and ready to check out!

At Home in the World: A Rule of Life for the Rest of Us by Margaret Guenther

A thoughtful, real-world interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict to guide us into a more balanced life.

Living with Parkinson's Disease: A Complete Guide for Patients and Caregivers by Michael Okun MD. An optimistic guide from an expert author

and the world authority on Parkinson's disease.

My Faith, My Life, Revised Edition: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church by Jenifer Gamber. *My Faith, My Life is a trusted confirmation curriculum for the Episcopal Church.*

The Parkinson's Plan: A New Path to Prevention and Treatment by Ray Dorsey MD.
A groundbreaking prescriptive guide to preventing and fighting Parkinson's disease.

Common Prayer for Children and Families by Jenifer Gamber. *Whimsical, simple illustrations and prayers drawn from Episcopal prayer resources.*



Visit the GIVING TREE at the foyer entrance to the Parish Hall!

What are these new signs on first floor bathrooms?





You will notice Occupied/Vacant signs on the bathroom doors on the first floor, next to the elevator. These have been added to accommodate members of the parish or visitors who need assistance from caregivers while in the restroom. Caregivers will slide the sign to OCCUPIED while in the restroom, and then will slide it back to VACANT when they have finished assisting.

We do not have a Family Restroom at St. James that is also accessible for those in wheelchairs, walkers, or in need of other mobility assistance, and so this is the best temporary solution we have found while figuring out a longer term solution.

What do I do if I need to use the restroom and the sign says it is occupied? There is another set of restrooms directly above on the second floor- simply use the elevator next to the restrooms to access those, or: knock on the bathroom door and ask if it is ok to come in.

Hospitality is a central Christian virtue, and we are trying to do what we can to be a welcoming space for all in the reality of an aging building!

Questions? Reach out to me directly at rector@stjamesmarietta.com!

MOVIE REVIEW: The *Murdaugh* Series

Last week for four successive nights I was transfixed by the eight episodes of *Murdaugh: Death in the Family*. I also confess that I was fascinated by the unfolding events of 2024 as the murders of Maggie and Paul Murdaugh pronounced “murr dock”) were investigated and presented on television in real time. (The name is as Irish as the red hair.)

Of course, my initial plan was just to watch enough to see our rooms on display. But that fascination passed to the extent that I forgot to notice where the characters were and never doubted their being in their offices and halls rather than in the St. Anne’s or conference room or the parlor or our hall with its telltale ramp.

What I watched was the production of a well-wrought script, expertly brought to life by a team of directors and a superb cast led by Patricia Arquette and Jason Clarke, whom I fully believed to be Maggie and Alex Murdaugh. Set against beautifully shot day and night-time sea and landscapes and glorious interiors of how the rich and famous live and, at times, lied and stole in parish rooms transformed into a law firm, the story of the latest three generations of a mighty and wealthy South Carolina family was riveting.

What is the attraction? It is the age-old morality tale of the fall of a house of mostly entitled, selfish, arrogant, and corrupt villains who will spare no one in order to have their ways until, finally, they go too far. There are only occasional glimpses of Christianity, and pretty much everyone swears and is vulgar perpetually, so be warned. The prettiness of what we see is only surface deep. Even though I read that the order of events is rearranged and some of the story is fictionalized, the overall picture is harrowing and haunting, and, finally, true to its core. This is indeed what might have happened in America, as it has in the past among medieval European royal and quarreling dynasties whose ambitions exceeded their grasp. Temporal power lasts just that long. Is this all about money and the lust for power?

- Dr. Laura Dabundo

Dr. Dabundo will be speaking on another subject on which she is a world-renowned expert, Jane Austen. It's time to reserve your seat now for the event on December 18, 1:00-2:30p [Find](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Flower Guild opportunities. While greenery takes the place of flowers during Advent, the Flower Guild offers you ways to get involved.

Photo: Tiffany Fannin was among the many who fashioned Advent wreaths last weekend.

Christmas flower donations may be given in thanksgiving for God's gifts to us or in loving memory of friends and family members. Notations will be included in the Christmas Vigil and Christmas Day service bulletins. The process to give is quick and easy. Forms are provided in the

narthex. Please return the forms in person or by mail before 9am Monday, December 22. [Link here to the form.](#)

Join the flower guild in flowering the church for Christmas! We'll be working on Tuesday, December 23rd from 9am-12pm. No experience necessary.

Artisans' Bazaar at Sterling Estates, Friday Dec 5, 10am-3pm. Sterling Estates is a retirement community in West Cobb, where many of our parishioners live. We share communion there every 3rd Sunday of the month.

The bazaar Friday is "a big deal" says Joan Hargrove, a member of St. James. Her own creations are on sale at the bazaar.



Diaper Drive. We are collecting diapers for the Pantry on Church, a commodity in high demand. Size 6 is most-requested.

Natalie is also leading a drive for canned protein -- think, tuna fish.

REMINDERS

Wonderful Days Newsletter. Link to the [newsletter of Wonderful Days](#) for photos and stories about the free preschool that we host and support in many ways.

Could Family Promise be YOUR ministry? Homeless shelters separate older boys and adult men from women and children; we, in partnership with a dozen other churches, have, in the past, helped to keep families together. If you are interested in helping to revive our Family Promise ministry, please complete the linked survey.

[Fill the Family Promise survey here](#)

Food Pantry next door! Our next-door neighbors have a thriving program to stock empty pantries year-round. Several of our members help. Read more at the website of First Presbyterian

Bible Study Tuesdays 12:30pm. Come to the Conference Room, 127.

Free books! Browse the Library's table in the Parish Hall from which you may choose as many books as you'd like to take home.

Prayer list. To receive the weekly prayer list, email Cari Edwards selvine@hotmail.com Leave prayer requests in the offering plate or at the desk by the parish office. You can phone in prayer requests 770-428-5841 Mondays through Thursdays, 9-12:30.



Parking passes for St. James. During scheduled church events, Cornerstone doesn't charge for vehicles in our Polk Street Lot. Other times, we do need a parking tag to hang in our autos.

Send your name, your vehicle's make, model, **COLOR** and license plate number to Lucia Bird luciabird@gmail.com or 770.402.0024.

If your vehicle has changed since you got your hang tag, you will need a replacement, so give Lucia the information on the old hang tag, too.

Your pledge helps the Vestry plan for the year. [Pledge here.](#)

Contact Us

*Program staff available via email Sunday - Thursday;
office staff, Monday - Thursday, 9am-1pm*

Mother Mariclair is rector@stjamesmarietta.com

- *Emergency phone or text: 678.369.1775*
- *To make an appointment with the rector, sign up for a 15m check-in, a 30m chat, or a coffee hour at <https://calendly.com/rector-stjamesmarietta>*

Natalie Fowler is children@stjamesmarietta.com

Dr. Bryan Black is music@stjamesmarietta.com

Scott Smoot is communications@stjamesmarietta.com

Phone 770-428-5841.

Pulse of the Parish

from Scott Smoot, Communications Director

A Chants Encounter: In the parking lot after Sunday's service, a parishioner stopped his car to make a prediction to me. After hearing **Mother Mariclair** Sunday, he predicts that parishioners will be clamoring for more.

Thanks to **Jeff Whittingham** for yet more photos from the installation of our new rector on November 19. Thanks to **Rose Whittingham** for making sure he sent them to me! Here are a couple:



Just today, **Mother Mariclair** took a photo of volunteers as they wrapped gifts for the upcoming **Reach Out** luncheon (3rd Monday of the month).



I still take photos, too. Here are new parishioners **Kurt** and **Angela Wood** on the first Sunday in Advent. Their **name tags** are now posted placed alphabetically in the rack by the narthex, along with tags for **Mason, Elise, Christine, Andrea, and Brent**. *New to us?* Request a name tag at the communications table at the entrance to the parish hall.



[Contact Us](#) [Service Bulletin](#) [Livestream](#) [Giving](#) [Social Media](#)



news, inspiration
and opportunities
for ministry

Message from the Rector
Prayer for Thanksgiving

Dear Ones

Thanksgiving is one of only two secular holidays that get their own collects in the Book of Common Prayer- the other is Labor Day.

You can find the Thanksgiving Day collect on p. 194 (Rite I) and p. 246 (Rite II) of the BCP, and it's a great blessing to use before your Thanksgiving meal.

Personally, I prefer the Rite I language as it has a little extra majesty with its formality and arcane usage:

Thanksgiving Day
Almighty and gracious Father, we give thee thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we beseech thee, faithful stewards of thy great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

You can hear this collect live at Evening Prayer at 6:30PM on Wednesday, Nov 24th on Thanksgiving Eve. All other usual Wednesday programming is taking the night off for the holiday this week, and the parish office will be closed on Thursday and Friday.

As you celebrate Thanksgiving this week I encourage you to take some time to name all the things that you are grateful for- better yet, in the case of those who you are thankful for, tell them!

As for me, I am grateful for each and every one of you- for the staff, for longtime members and the newly baptized, for our elders and our babies and everybody in between, and for the visitors in search of a spiritual

Tuesday
November 25, 2025
UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 26, Wednesday
**Evening Prayer
TOMORROW
at 6:30**



Enter by the red door on
Polk and Church St.,
at the top of the ramp



Nov 29, Saturday

You can download a PDF of this newsletter suitable for printing. [Link here.](#)



Share This Email

St. James Episcopal Church | 161 Church Street | Marietta, GA 30060 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!